

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

KICK THE NAZIS OUT!

Govt. try to put off Enquiry

The Department of the Environment's enquiry into the National Front's use of a warehouse in Great Eastern Street, Shoreditch, as their headquarters begins on Tuesday 4th December. Hackney Council has served a notice on the Front which requires them to stop using the building - which they call "Excalibur House" - as offices and as their headquarters.

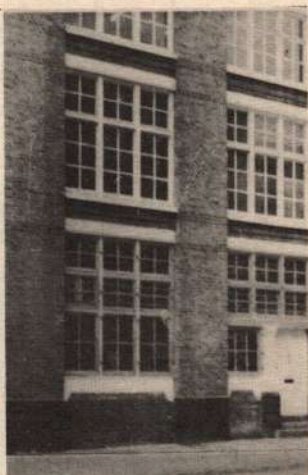
Two weeks before the enquiry opened, with massive public demonstrations planned for the evening before ending with an all-night vigil, DoE officials tried to persuade Hackney Council to agree to the adjournment that the Front had asked for. The Council wrote to the DoE saying why they could not agree. Then the DoE wrote back saying that the enquiry was to be postponed. Only quick protests from Council leaders persuaded the DoE to change their minds again.

The Council is not the only body which is asking for the Front to be refused permission to use Excalibur House. Hackney Trades Council, Hackney Community Link-Up, Hackney Council for Racial Equality and the Shoreditch Traders Association will also be represented. All these bodies are expected to argue the social, political and racial consequences for the area would be disastrous if the Front are allowed to organise openly in the area.

This is all so true. The last two years have seen a definite increase in racist attacks throughout the East End, and several murders. The frequent clashes in Brick Lane in the summer of 1978 - just half a mile from Great Eastern Street - are the subject of a new book published at the end of November by Tower Hamlets Trades Council. (This will be reviewed in the next issue of HPP.)

RUMOUR

Internal information from the NF continues to seep out to the rest of the world. The anti-fascist magazine "Searchlight" reports that there is a rumour that part of Excalibur House will be



leased to the even more violent and fascist British Movement. This remains to be shown to be a rumour or a horrifying fact. There has always been thought to be no love lost between the "reasonable, respectable democrats" of the NF, who see themselves as a normal political party, and the psychopathic thugs of the BM. If the two groups were to join up in the same building the possibilities would be very nasty indeed.

So it becomes imperative that the Council win its fight to have planning



permission refused. They say that they feel that they have a strong case, which could mean anything in lawyers' language. The DoE inspector will then go away and think about the case, and the Council will be told the Minister, Michael Heseltine's decision, in a month or two's time. It is possible that the matter could then be taken to the courts to solve, if either party feels that the DoE has incorrectly interpreted the law.

Whatever happens, this month will just be the first round in a number of legal battles between Hackney Council and the Front. There will be another planning enquiry in the New Year when the matter of the Front using the ground floor as a printing works will also be resolved. There is also an application in hand to run part of Excalibur House as a club, and that is being contested by Hackney through the licensing court. Martin Webster was reported as saying that he was not surprised by Hackney's action as the Council was run by "communists". He may not say the same to the DoE.

INSIDE

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CUTS MEETING

- what really happened...

KEN WORPOLE

- trips down Memory Lane and looks back over the Seventies....

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

- goes INSIDE LEFT, spotted of moles and listner at keyholes...

Festive Greetings to y'all





for better health services now

The Hackney Health Campaign was set up earlier this year to fight against the Government's proposed cuts in the Health Service, and to campaign for a better standard of health care for the people of Hackney. We have asked them to write regular articles each month, to keep readers informed of the latest developments in the fightback.

DEATH-KNELL SOUNDS LOUDER

The November meeting of the City and East London Area Health Authority brought no definite news of further cuts in Hackney's Health Service, but there were clear indications of what was to come. The Area is £1 million overspent so far this year. City and Hackney's share is £291,000. Attempts will be made to recoup this money and more.

ST LEONARDS

Despite the shrill cries of the AHA to the contrary, the ending of acute surgery and the closure of the 4 surgical wards at St Leonard's is already proving to be the death-knell for St Leonard's as we know it. An academic debate goes on amongst consultants about whether acute medical care can be provided without acute surgical backup. But before the debate is resolved, the AHA is raising questions about the continued viability of orthopaedic surgery, and the already reduced walk-in casualty service.

Orthopaedics

Now that ambulances are directed from St Leonard's no orthopaedic trauma cases (eg people with broken legs) are admitted. Since the majority of people on orthopaedic wards are gradually accident cases, the number of patients on the St Leonard's orthopaedic wards will fall unless a decision is made to bring in more patients on the list for non-urgent elective surgery (eg hip replacements). At the AHA meeting, Professor Spector (Chairman of City and Hackney District Management Team) said "The AHA has instructed the DMT to save money. Therefore it would be contrary to instructions to fill the vacuum with 'cold orthopaedics'".

The implication is that further wards could close. Yet we know that a major problem in Hackney is that few people are ever taken off the orthopaedic waiting list. The DMT officially has no information on the length of time people are waiting for elective orthopaedic operations, but the consultant orthopaedic surgeon at St Leonard's has written to the CHC about the length of his list, and his difficulty in fitting in urgent cases.

Accident and Emergency Unit

The AHA is discussing whether the A&E Unit should now open from 9am-5pm Mondays-Fridays, instead of the present 8am-8pm, 7 days a week. The first ever District Bulletin for St Leonard's staff issued on November 9th states that "considerable difficulties

are being experienced in maintaining adequate medical cover". A possibility now being mooted is whether the A&E could be run by Hackney GPs.

GPs are independent contractors employed neither by the District nor the Area. The financial incentive to do sessions in the A&E may be attractive to them. But many GPs are difficult enough to find in their own surgeries as it is.

Community Health Services

Community Clinics like Family Planning, Child Health, and Well Women Clinics have always been under-doctored. The District is now making things worse by not filling posts with community doctors who have to be employed. Again, GPs are being encouraged to mop up the effects of the cuts by doing these clinics on a sessional basis. Shades of lump labour?

ST MATTHEWS

The Day Unit at St Matthew's Hospital deserves a visit by anyone interested in the welfare of old people. It is modern, airy and attractive, and caters for a daily average of 37 old people. It is used by St Matthew's in-patients, out-patients brought in by ambulance, and lunch club members who come in on foot from the immediate Shoreditch area. At the Day Unit they can have a hot meal (diabetics are also catered for), take a bath, enjoy some company, and know that someone is keeping an eye on them. It is this kind of humane and caring provision which helps keep old people out of hospital beds.

St Matthew's Hospital is currently run by Tower Hamlets District, but is to be taken over by City and Hackney.

City and Hackney DMT say they haven't the money to keep St Matthew's Day Unit open. No alternative provision has been made for the 11-12 Hackney old people who use it as out-patients or luncheon-club members. Geriatric services are supposed to be priority services, and not subject to cuts. But once more Tory Government determination to cut public spending has been accepted by our local health service authorities in the face of passive local suffering and need.

Hackney Health Campaign meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm, CHC office, 210 Kingsland Road, E2. Phone 739 6308 to check venue. All welcome.

If your community group/union branch/tenants' association would like a speaker from the campaign, contact Lynne Harne, c/o CHC, on 739 6308.



INSIDE LEFT

Our new ace investigative reporter and political columnist, INSIDE LEFT, the man with the snap-brim trilby and the Robert Redford tan cord suit, has been looking for moles in his first assignment for HPP as he explores Hackney Behind Closed Doors.

In the Town Hall corridors there are no Queens, and No Royal Collections of Pictures which might require a velvet-nosed Keeper. (There is an appalling selection of giant colour photographs of all Hackney's mayors - the unwhiskered Johnny Kotz of 15 years ago, dolled up in his mayoral robes, stares down from the wall. There is also an Arts Officer, but that appears to be the limit of the borough's artistic investments.)

I can, however, reveal that there is a secret organisation inside the Town Hall, whose aims are obscure and devious. There is a rumour that they might be a tightly-knit group of politically motivated men and women, but this is not exactly certain. None of them was at Cambridge in the 1930s, but some of them seem to have been burrowing away in Mare Street since round about then. It is thought that there might be as many as 59 of them, and that they do belong to an organisation called the "Labour Party". According to the yellow press, a collection of newspapers published in central London by a bunch of food magnates in their spare time, this is a body now composed entirely of bed-sitter Trotskists and arm-chair revolutionaries, whereas in the past it had decent people in it like Nye Bevan.

So-called

However, it is not clear what the people in this so-called Labour Party are trying to do. They apparently think that they are running the borough council! It is well known that this is not so. Hackney is, of course, run by the multi-national companies, the CIA-IMF-inspired conspiracies of the running dogs of American imperialism and Mrs Thatcher. Hackney will only be rescued for the interests of its people when all the top 500 companies are nationalised, the rates are cut by 50 per cent and comrades sell ten million copies of the new pamphlet, The Case For The Revolutionary Militant Workers' Tendency.

The way in which these puppets perform is an illusion also. There is a myth that an institution like a borough council operates as a democratic institution and is accountable to the people who elect it. This is not so. Aside from the appalling lack of interest by people in local politics, so that the actual nail-biting dramas are witnessed usually by about a dozen outsiders, the power does not reside in the open council at all. It lies first of all in the committee system, where most of the im-

portant decisions are taken, and which always include secret parts of the agenda. Secondly, and most importantly, power lies in the authoritarian nature of the Labour group. Here the "politically motivated men and women" (to quote, out of context, Harold Wilson) make decisions in complete secrecy, which then go through action replays in the open council meeting two days later.

Group

The group consists of every Labour member of the council. In addition, two members of each of the three Labour parties in the borough can attend, but cannot vote. This is supposed to be the liaison between the Labour politicians, and the rest of the people - or at least the people who can be bothered to join the Labour party - in the world outside. And

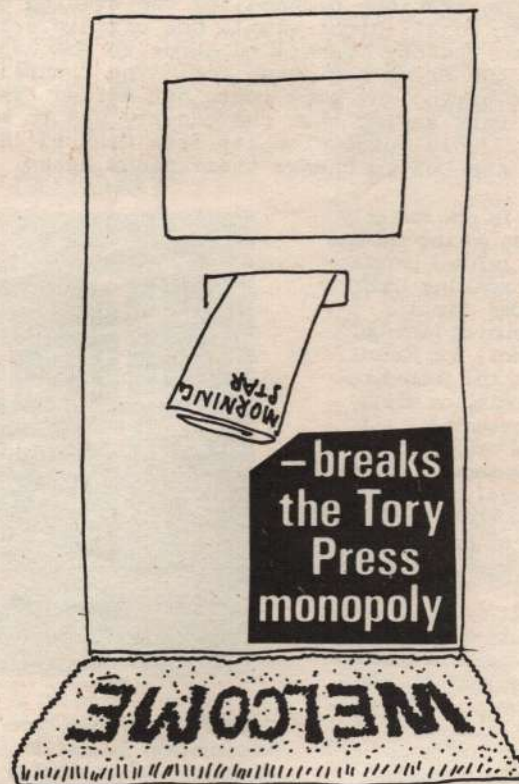
the bitterest rows always take place there, tucked firmly away from the public.

Now, what are we to make of the Broad Left? This was a group of mainly new councillors elected in 1978, who took office mouthing brave words about challenging the leadership and leading Hackney a few steps along the path towards the socialist utopia. Once there was a manifesto called, somewhat whimsically, "Labour Cares: About People and Progress in Hackney". All plans of putting that manifesto into complete effect seem to have vanished now, and the Broad Left has disintegrated. Once they could claim to have maybe as many as 24 members, yet at their last meeting they were down to four! Instead of striving to increase support amongst some of the non-aligned members, who are just as fed up as them with the authoritarian leadership, they seemed to have vanished in a puff of little squabbles.

This is the situation down among the moles of Mare Street. There are many people burrowing away, leaving tiny mounds of earth on the surface. But across the landscape Mrs Thatcher gallops, on a mighty steed which will not be troubled by any of these minor lumps on the surface. It will require a massive mountain of earth thrown up by more than just a few little people with velvet noses. That's where our moles should be, digging deep and leading the fight. Are they there? Is there anyone there?

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Men and Kids

Achilles Heel number three should be available in your bookshop in the next few days. It is a magazine produced by a group of men who have been involved in men's consciousness-raising groups and the politics of living as men for some time, a group that has found that "men's power in society not only oppresses women but also imprisons us in a deadening masculinity which cripples all our relationships".

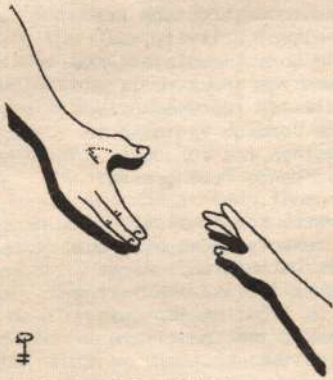
Perhaps one of the most interesting articles is called "Pregnant Fatherhood - Two Years On". Paul, the father, takes Corey to the park. "I change Corey's nappy. Some kids wander by and point at me. Fantasies go through my head. 'Child molester.' I am brusquer than usual when I wash Corey's bum. We pass the entrance to the mothers and toddlers club. Corey is obviously interested. There are some more things to do here. A sandpit. But the place is full of mothers and children, nattering familiarly. I would feel very out of place there. If I felt sunny and talkative, it would be okay. But in my present mood, it would be very difficult."

ANCIENT TRIBE

As a result of some of the problems of childcare, he fantasises about "the ancient tribe" and these fantasies are brought to birth for a while at the Men's Week at Laurieston Hall which he describes: "In the morning after I had got Corey dressed I would go into the bathroom to shave. She would waddle off on her own around the house, padding along the corridors. Sometimes I wouldn't see her again for two or three hours after that. Some man would pick her up if she got lost or tired. More than likely,

she'd find the other kids who would take care of her and bring her into their game. Another man would look after her. Yet another might take her down to the creche."

Later he writes: "It's hard to know how to write this piece. I am dipping about inside an experience that is so powerful and having such a deep effect on me that I can scarcely begin to gain any proper perspective on it."



It's hard for him to write this piece, but it's also difficult for me to write about it. Although the article is generally interesting and readable, there is the odd paragraph which I find pretty alienating, e.g.: "I think you need to be single weighted to be with kids a lot. This is a notion I have learned from a brief excursion into Tai-Chi, where it refers to the ability to sink your weight into one foot, leaving the other free to move where it needs to. It's a combination of groundness and lightness, or flexibility." In other words, you've got to be adaptable to be with kids a lot.

There are other long articles on impressions of the Manchester Men's Conference, a very personal and really interesting article. Another personal article is about the relations between a boy and his teacher, which is both intriguing and very

readable, with one climax coming at the visit to the teacher's home in the better side of town, in West Bridgeford. "We called it 'bread and lard island' because people were supposed to be so keen to provide a display of their status over there that they would buy houses beyond their means and have to live on bread and lard."

There are two sets of extracts, one from an article on James Baldwin, a writer who, according to the Achilles Heel collective, "being gay as well as black, Baldwin has lived with an acute awareness of sexual and racial oppression." The other is extracts from a new book as yet unfinished about sexual relationships in the seventies.

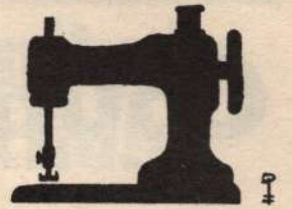
There is also a too brief plug for Rock Against Sexism, a list of all the men's groups known to Achilles Heel, and a selection of small ads.

LOUSY LAYOUT

An impressive list of contents, therefore, but I'm very disappointed by the presentation of this material. It appears as though it might have been designed to alienate any casual buyer and I'm pleased to see this criticism echoed by one of the letters in the magazine which says: "In general, I liked it, except for some of the layout, which I tend to have fairly traditional ideas on."

The number of columns vary from two to four at a variety of different angles, some handwritten and some expensively typeset. All in all, it is very offputting, particularly at the high price of 50p, but having said that, it's really worth reading, and I just wish it came out twice or four times as often than its current three times a year.

New Deal for Homeworkers



Never let it be said that we don't give praise to Hackney Council when they deserve it. Hackney Borough Council has become the first authority in the country to appoint a Homeworking Officer. This was announced at a council meeting on 21 November, and Martin Ottolangui specifically asked the press, including your humble scribe, to inform the world of this fact.

Over the years we have reported the difficulties that have faced campaigners and trade unions in trying to improve the lot of homeworkers, whose rates of pay can sometimes be as low as 10p per

hour, and it is gratifying to see that local authorities are at last beginning to realise that they could do much in this field. Brian Hodge, the new Homeworking Officer, will mainly be concerned with trying to get local firms to register homeworkers and investigating alternatives to homeworking, including the provision of industrial day nurseries. He will also be liaising with other officers, Government departments and voluntary organisations. He will doubtless be a busy man.

Contact Brian Hodge, Economic Development Unit, 1 Hoxton Street, N1 739 7600

Staff speak

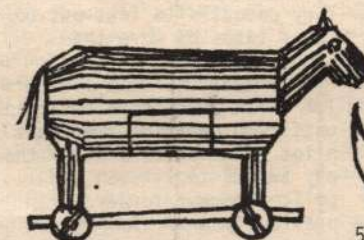
The fiasco over Smalley Estate has exposed another linked row inside the Council's architects department. They issued a press statement early in November criticising the inadequacy of management over the last three years. What particularly upset the staff was the fact that Building Systems Development, the independent consultants employed by Tony Shoultis, the Chief Housing Officer, were taken on to prepare a specialist report in a crisis, without adequate consultation.

They now feel that the public wrangle over the report has only obscured the

real lessons of the affair, which are "the continuous economic pressure to make council house building a second class welfare provision, both physically and psychologically".

The "shop floor" revolt by the staff has meant that at last members of the architects department are coming forward and accepting the failures. What the junior members have said makes it more clear that the faults do lie in the design, and more importantly, in the management that put these designs into practice. This will not really be of much physical comfort to the tenants of Smalley as they face the beginning of the winter.

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POETRY DEBATED

Dear HPP

Les Skeates' criticism of Hackney Council's Poetry Competition and Prize Award Evening in the last issue of HPP raises a number of questions for socialists who believe poetry is an essential part of meaningful living.

He seems to argue from the classic Marxist stance that all art must have a political message that is acceptable to his own political viewpoint and the class struggle.

It is this position that leads him to sweep aside the competition adjudicator, Danny Abse, as a right-wing reactionary and to condemn one of the winning poems for its alleged working-class bias. However, if you invite people to submit poems on their own experiences, it would ill-behave a democratic socialist council to impose a censorship, as Mr Skeates suggests, to prevent "a betrayal of socialism".

As for the professional



letters

actors whose accents Les Skeates deplores: personally, I enjoy hearing poetry well read. If I wanted to hear a hard working-class accent, I could listen to myself.

The Hackney Poetry Scene has two main streams, not necessarily divergent. The Hackney Poetry Circle produces work on a wide spectrum of human experience without direct or intentional political motivation by people who just feel the need to write

creatively. Surely this is participation by people for people?

Mr Skeates' own group, the Hackney Writers Workshop, seems to attach itself to the class struggle, and in my view, like most directly and intentionally political art, it is often contrived and wooden in poetic form, believing the message is everything, to the exclusion of the golden glory that lifts everyday language into realms of true art.

I would suggest it is time the Writers Workshop came off its rostrum and ceased preaching to the converted at its rather self-conscious gatherings and organised an evening reading with Hackney Library Services to offer the wider Hackney public a choice between message-drumming poetry and the all-embracing kind Mr Skeates seems to dislike so much. Why not let a hundred flowers bloom?

Yours faithfully
Bob Masters.

Council 'Expose' Government

Realising that concern had to be shown on the issue of public service cuts, Hackney Council staged a public meeting on Tuesday 13th. November to debate how best to tackle the Government's imposed spending limits.

However, if any of the 500 or so who turned up to the meeting expected to hear the Council take a stand against the Tories' savage destruction of inner-city services, they were sadly disappointed.

Opening the meeting, Deputy Leader of the Council John Kotz attacked the Government for imposing spending limits on local authority budgets, a measure which would hit a borough like Hackney the most. Yet instead of refusing to carry out the Government's demands, he presented the residents with the alternative of either accepting a cut in standards of health, education and welfare in the borough, or paying a massive rates rise.

He acknowledged that Hackney would be one of

the areas to suffer most from either option, pointing out that a rates rise in a well-off borough such as Westminster would net 10 times as much revenue as Hackney. Such a rise, he said, could be as much as 75%. However, he did not point out that the Government had a responsibility to support the running of services vital to the borough and that the Council, elected by the ratepayers of the borough, had an equal responsibility to protect its electors from devastating rates increases. For those who made so bold as to demand no reduction in spending, he cautioned: "You can't say there'll be no cuts without accepting an increase in rates".

Responsibility

The aim of John Kotz's speech was to place the blame squarely on the shoulders of the Tory Government, which in principle is justified, but in doing so he effectively washed his and the

Council's hands of any responsibility to fight the Government's policies. He smugly claimed: "There have been no cuts in services this year...there has been an increase". An increase on what?

Free Speech

When the meeting was opened to the floor, most of the comments seemed to reflect concern not just over what the Government was doing, but over what the Council was going to do to defend its residents' living standards. Contrary to the Hackney Gazette's claim, those Tories who got up at the meeting were not denied free speech; in fact, several Conservative Party members got hold of the microphone to defend their leaders' policies, but when Tory candidate Tim Miller admitted he did not actually live in Hackney he was shouted down by the whole of the meeting - a very democratic exercise.

Many speakers demanded that the Council adopt a policy of 'No Cuts, No

Redundancies, No Rent and Rates Increases'. David Green, Secretary of Hackney Communist Party, called on the Council to fight for a better rate support grant settlement, and to cut unemployment, "a major area of public expenditure". In reply Cllr. Kotz admitted that 15% of vacancies were not taken up.

Charles Clarke, Information Officer for the People in Partnership Scheme, believed that the labour movement needed to restructure its channels of activity, by making more immediate links between the grass roots and the elected representatives in the borough and also to strengthen the borough's independence from central government.

Several speakers said that tenants, community and trades union groups were prepared to take the initiative in fighting the cuts, and asked the Council to provide the necessary resources: in particular, to organise a conference in the near future to discuss policy. Apart from agreeing to support the National Cuts Demonstration on Nov. 28th,

no positive offer of help was made from the council platform.

The Council reaction to the meeting's demands for a determined stand against both cuts and rates increases was evident in Johnny Kotz's winding up speech. He was all in favour of the Nov. 28 National Demo. "This Council supports it", he said, "and we should encourage every worker to support it". Just what this encouragement came down to was nothing more than verbal. Asked why they would not give their workers a day's paid holiday to go on the demonstration, Kotz replied: "As an old trades unionist, if there is a demonstration worth demonstrating about, you support it regardless of whether you are paid or not".

It is hard to know what the Council achieved with this public relations attempt. Kotz claimed: "We have exposed tonight what the Government is attempting to do". Very good. What was never made clear was what the Council was going to do.

WHY RATE SUPPORT ISN'T ENOUGH

On 16th November Hackney received some very bad news. Tory Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine announced the new Rate Support Grant settlement, and the Inner London boroughs have suffered a severe drop in government grant.

The RSG is the grant paid from central government to townhalls and it is fixed every November for the following financial year. It varies in amount and distribution from year to year, but since the mid 1970's it has steadily declined as a proportion of overall local government spending. In 1975/76 the government picked up 66.5% of the bill but by this year this has dropped to 61%, and even lower on some estimates. This fall may not sound like very much but local government spends an enormous amount: an estimated £15.7 billion during next year. So the percentage decline amounts to over £1 billion, equipment to the entire local authority social service budget in England and Wales. Heseltine has kept the percentage at 61% next year.

Excess

In addition to the drop in percentage grant over the years central government has imposed "cash limits" on local government expenditure. Last year for example Labour Minister Peter Shore said he would meet 61% provided local government cost increases during the year stayed within the 5% limit on pay (remember?) and 7½% limit on other costs. They didn't and all the excess over these levels came out of the rates. That is why rates shot up last year, and why, for all the talk of over-

spending Labour councils, in the metropolitan districts where there was an even spread of Labour and Tory authorities, Tory councils in fact put up their rates by more than Labour councils.

This year the cash limit is 13% which sounds more realistic until you bear in mind that a lot is taken care of by the pay awards to firemen and police brought forward from previous years. In fact if pay settlements exceed 10% then again the excess will come entirely from the rates. This is a particularly nasty development as it pits the interests of local authority workers directly against ratepayers and against the needs of those who most need local authority services. Divide and rule in fact.

Needs Element

If all that wasn't bad enough Hackney and six other London boroughs have all lost the maximum possible amount of grant. The grant is divided into three parts. Smallest is the domestic element which is the deduction from domestic rate bills. That has stayed the same. The second largest naturally is the resources element which brings all authorities except those with high rateable values up to a certain level of rateable values. Unfortunately for Hackney we are one of those few authorities above the limit so we get no resources element whatsoever.

Finally we come to the needs element. This has served Hackney well over the years being designed to compensate for spending need, that is social stress and high costs. As Hackney has both we have for

several years received the highest needs element allocation in the country. (But because it is worked out on a penny rate basis we did not get most actual cash.)

However this year, because of population decline, Hackney and other London boroughs have lost the maximum amount - a 3p rate. So with no resources element and a maximum cut in needs element Hackney has been properly clobbered. There can be no doubt that rates will rise next year, whether the Council cuts, stabilises or expands services. All those protesting ratepayers take note: it is to Heseltine, as it should have been to Shore last year that your anger is directed.

Robin Simpson

Unity against Cuts

An important step in developing the fight against the cuts was taken this month when a new, All-Hackney Campaign Against the Cuts was formed at a well-attended meeting of Hackney Trades Council, including representatives from trades union, political, ethnic, community and tenants groups.

At the meeting Dermot McNeill, Trades Council Secretary, spoke of the need to build a broadly based, militant campaign against the government's cutbacks, which are already having a devastating effect on the lives of all workingclass people.

Helen Rosenthal and Lynne Hame, representing the Hackney Health Campaign out-

lined the severity of the attack on the National Health Service which has been the first major public service in the borough to face really major cuts in funding and reductions in services.

At the end of the meeting it was agreed to form very local campaigning groups in Hackney, to form a committee composed of delegates from the Trades Union Movement, political parties, community and tenants groups, and to support the various local and national actions against the cuts.

For further information on the campaign, contact:

Dermot McNeill, Secretary Hackney Trades Council, 6 Geldeston Road, E5.

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Can we do better?

Big political and industrial struggles against the Tory government's policies are steadily, sometimes explosively, developing throughout the country. Hackney is no exception. Workers are joining in national, London and local action against the cuts in public services generally, and in the health and education services in particular. Thatcher's pace of reactionary politics is fast - by necessity our response needs to be faster. Imaginative, effective, well-supported action against the Tories and those who collaborate with them is the priority.

For our hard work to be successful more than effort and struggle is necessary - political, practical short and long-term alternatives to the Tories plans must also be developed and campaigned for.

HARD

I see a main aim of this second conference of the Hackney left as the provision of a forum for tackling some of these hard questions as well as providing an additional route into political involvement for those who wish to become involved. Some of the hard questions we need to look at include sensitive issues such as the relatively low level of co-operation between different sections of the labour and democratic movements in the borough. The relationship between developing democratic structures for the political participation and involvement of people and the present work of the left needs examination. The actions of the two major working class political parties - the Labour party and the Communist party - need

scrutiny - for example, how are we working to promote socialist consciousness amongst the people? The workings and action of the Council are a vital concern. The confusion evident at the Council public meeting on the Tory cuts is only the most recent example of the importance of clear, socialist political leadership from the Council. The labour and community movements of the borough all consider Council affairs important - hence the big push for trade union etc representation on Council committees. The perspective on the Council and its actions from now until the 1982 elections is too important to be left purely as an inter-party struggle. What are our plans?

The aim of socialists is to win a society where the working class and our allies have political power. A new society where the capacities of every individual are fully developed. Are the ways in which we work now, the ways in which we fight to change the state's organisations, and our own, the ways in which we struggle against oppression the best we can manage?

It is to help answer these questions in a specific Hackney context that makes this left conference important. It is for this reason that I believe that despite the heavy calendar of meetings, demonstrations, strikes etc that this conference should and will provide a vital input into the movement against the Tories and for a socialist future.

David Green
Hackney Communist Party

ADVERTISEMENT



The Rio Centre, 107 Kingsland High Street, E8. 254 6677.

DATE OF AGM CHANGED: The Rio's AGM is now being held on 28 January at 8pm at the Rio. Please become a member!

DECEMBER

Weekly programmes

Mon 3	ERASERHEAD (X) and
For 6 days	THE CRAZIES (X)
Mon 10	THE CARPETTES and THE STATISTICS
	in concert
Tues 11	TOP HAT (U) and SWING TIME (U)
Wed 12	CAROL GRIMES and SWEET FA and
	SOULYARD in concert
Thurs 13	THAT SINKING FEELING gala benefit
Fri 14	THE ATTACK OF THE 50 FOOT WOMAN and
	NOT OF THIS EARTH
Sat 15	A celebration of Asian Dance, Music
	and Poetry
Mon 17	DREAD BEAT AND BLOOD and
For 6 days	THE HARDER THEY COME (X)
Thurs 27	ARISTOCATS (U) and
For 3 days	LONDON CONNECTION (U)

Saturday lates and Sunday matinees in December include SEBASTIANE, JUBILEE, LADY SINGS THE BLUES, CABARET, SOME LIKE IT HOT and GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES. Ring Cinema for details of dates and times.

For details and times of programmes, please phone the cinema.

What's Left?



The second What's Left for Hackney conference will be held on Sunday 9 December, at the All Nations Club, Martello Street, E8, starting at 10.45am. Registration 50p (25p claimants).

The programme for the day includes:

OPENING SESSION: What could socialism mean to the people of Hackney? How does it relate to our struggle today?

Speakers: Sheila Rowbotham, Stuart Weir.

- WORKSHOPS: 1. Communication and co-operation on the left.
2. Reaching out to people in large workplaces and estates.
3. Who runs Hackney - democracy and the Council.
4. The cuts in Hackney - building the campaign.

CLOSING SESSION AND REPORT BACK: Socialist strategy and local objectives.

Speakers: Ted Knight, David Green.

Light lunch, tea, coffee and creche all available. Please inform organisers in advance if you are bringing children to creche.

The first conference of this type in July brought together more than 150 people from a wide variety of groups and organisations. Three of these organisations have submitted articles printed on this page which argue for a united approach by socialists to the problems of the borough. We see that the only way to progress is to find out where we all agree, and move forward to consolidate that position.

Details of the conference from Hackney People's Press, c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8. 249 0311 or 254 1306

Common Agreement

Hackney North Labour Party has voted to support the second "What's Left In Hackney?" conference and a good number of members and activists are expected to attend. What do we hope to get out of the conference and what is it that we hope the conference will achieve?

"Left unity" is a phrase that we hear more often today, and one which many of us are prepared to discuss and advocate. There are a number of reasons for this, but in my view one of the main ones is the evident failure, after two prolonged doses, of a Labour government pursuing social democratic policies to solve the economic and social crisis in Britain in ways that meet the needs of working people. This has had the effect of provoking a crisis within the Labour party and is producing a new alignment of forces within the party.

OPEN

Another consequence of the failure of social democratic policies has been a willingness of many in the Labour party to be more open and receptive to the criticisms that are made from people in other socialist political organisations. One of the main thrusts of criticism that is accepted by many today and that was directed against the centrists in the party and the old (Tribune) left is that significant advances cannot be made simply by struggling within Parliament or within Local Councils for the implementation of progressive policies. By neglecting struggles outside these formal, representative arenas, by failing to develop socialist policies at the grass roots and deep in working class communities the Labour party found itself without any significant strength to oppose

those who directly wield economic power in our society.

So many of us in the Labour left today see local activity and local struggles as important both in themselves as ways in which the working class is developing means of organising its own affairs, and in relation to the broader struggle against capitalism upon which any real emancipation must depend.

The crisis within the Labour party has been matched by a crisis within the other political organisations on the left. Blind rejection of the Labour party has given way, in some quarters, to a more careful analysis.

In this context, I would like to put forward two propositions concerning the way in which questions of left unity should be approached.

The first concerns joint activity against the cuts in public services and other struggles to defend or improve the living conditions of people in Hackney - over hospitals, nurseries, lorries, nuclear safety, etc. In these urgent struggles around concrete and immediate issues, we must work together on the basis of what we can agree in common. This will be our approach, and is the only basis that will prevent solits, subdivisions and a weakening of these struggles.

Secondly, I hope we will engage in debate to reveal those arguments and principles that really do divide socialists today, as distinct from those prejudices that we may hold concerning organisations other than our own. To advance this debate I would venture the following proposition: the real debate concerns not what we want to achieve but how we are to go about the task of organising for struggle for socialism.

Tony Millwood
Hackney North and Stoke
Newington Labour Party

Unity in action

Why another conference? The answer should be obvious. The scope and breadth of the anti-Tory mobilisations which have already taken place - on the cuts, Ireland, abortion, immigration laws - pose a real challenge to the left.

How can we co-ordinate our efforts and develop this activity in a socialist direction so that something more than a re-run of the last Labour government is posed as an alternative to the Tories?

We have to be honest and say that the situation where a plethora of different left groups either ignore or denounce each other at the expense of any common discussion or co-ordination is a barrier to developing a wider audience for socialist ideas and activity.

Of course our differences are important and should not be downplayed. The point is to establish a framework in which they can be discussed out and clarified - where people can see what unites us as well as what divides us.

We believe that this can be done on the basis of a common commitment to mobilise working people in mass action to kick out the Tories, and a preparedness to confront those in the labour movement who oppose the necessity of such a course of action.

In other words, the heart of our concerns must be to sharpen the political offensive against the Tories to a point where the whole capitalist system they defend is challenged.

FORUM

This can't be done just by holding another conference every few months. Something more tangible needs to come out of our discussions on 9 December; but something which reinforces rather than cuts across what we are doing already.

In my view, we should discuss the possibility of some kind of regular socialist forum - perhaps meeting monthly? This would not be a new organisation but a focus where those in different political organisations or none, those involved in particular campaigns and so on could engage in a continuing dialogue about how to press forward the fight for socialist policies.

An example here which immediately faces us is the question of the Council. Will our Labour councillors head a fight against the Tory cut-backs? If not, what do we do about it - to challenge the present way Hackney is run?

Such a forum would also provide a reference point for discussing other possible initiatives which have been suggested, such as a Hackney Festival of Socialism or a resource centre.

Finally, we all need to discuss more thoroughly the role Hackney People's Press can play in this fight, the resources it needs to do this and what we are prepared to contribute.

Each group can't go it alone against the Tory attacks. Unity in action must be the watchword for this conference.

Martin Meteyard
Hackney International
Marxist Group

HACKNEY

David's story



"David"
"Yes, Mum"
"Well you know that your dad has been hitting me"
"Yes, Mum"
"Well, I've thought of a way of getting rid of him."
How are you going to do that, Mum?"
All I have to do is to pack his clothes and tell him to leave straight away. Isn't that a good idea of mine?" said Mrs Johnson.
"Well, I don't think so?" said David.
"Neither do I" came a shout from the hallway. It was Mr Johnson himself.

"And what makes you think I ought to go away?" asked Mr Johnson.
"Well, you're always hitting me for no reason at all", exclaimed Mrs Johnson.
"Now you know that's not true at all, Flo (Mrs Johnson)". Mr Johnson then put down his briefcase and umbrella and slapped Mrs Johnson round the face.
"Let that be a lesson to you, you know that if you lie in front of the child

he will catch on" said Mr Johnson to Flo.
"But I'm not lying to you, Paul (Mr Johnson)". David then ran upstairs to his room and on his way he kicked a nail, and gave a loud shrill scream that echoed right through the passage hallway and right through the kitchen. When David's parents came out and saw David on the stairs rubbing his big toe.
"That was all your fault, Dad," said David.

to be continued...

ESTHER RANTZEN VISIT

On Monday 11th of November the Hackney Kids Paper crew went to Kensington House. At first we went to the B.B.C T.V. studios and

asked the security guard if we could go in to see Esther, but they said No. We said that we had been invited, and the guard said "Where is the letter" and we told him that we had left it at home. So the officer said that he couldn't let us in to see Esther, so we thought that we might have to go back. So Paul with his great brains went into the B.B.C.

bookshop, and he went to the lady and chatted her up and then asked her for the Kensington House phone number, and she gave it to us. So we phoned up Kensington House and we spoke to Esther's secretary and she gave us the directions. When we reached there, we went to the That's Life office and we saw Esther and she took us in a little room and we started to ask her some questions.

Some of the things we asked Esther Rantzen were:

How did you get started T.V. ?
"I started as a tv analyst, then they asked me to do a new programme called "That's Life" with a man from Nationwide, and from Doctor on the Go, but they both had to go back to their programmes; so they had to get different men, Kieron and John, then Cyril and now this is what we have."

"Would you work for ITV if they asked you?"

to be continued...

INTERVIEW WITH M.P. CONTD.

HACKNEY KID'S PAGE TALKS TO ERNIE ROBERTS

Question 5)
What is your point of view about Margaret Thatcher?

As far as I'm concerned she is very right wing. She wants to attack the trade unions and she wants to take away the right that they won under the Labour Govt.

And she is a dangerous woman. She talks about bringing American nuclear rockets into Britain and making Britain an American nuclear base and this is a very dangerous

thing because in the event of a nuclear war, Britain would become a prime target, and you wouldn't need many nuclear bombs on Britain to destroy it. She speaks in a very war like way and in my opinion as I said she is a very dangerous woman.
The House of Commons is very nice but there is heavy security.

While we were in the cafe listening to the tape that we had just recorded our

interview on, a Tory M.P. came over and started to tell off Ernie for playing the tape too loud, saying in a very upper class sort of voice "I say, could you turn that tape recorder down, you're playing it a bit loud, this is a public place etc etc etc," and we thought they were going to fight because they were both so serious.

But they didn't.

KIDS PAPER MUSIC



Mods are going to come back. That's what everybody is saying. Punks are going out. Groups like Secret Affair and the Jam are coming up. Some people say that The Jam is a mod group, and some say that they're punk, but in a magazine interview recently they said that they were mods. The greatest ever mod group was The Who who are currently touring in New York.

Purple Hearts have a new record out on Friction records. It's called Frustration.

Yes, if the money was right. I have worked for them once before."
Then one of us kicked something that went "Kling" and Esther said "Do you know what that is?" and I could see it was a cot, and I said "Is that the cot that the baby died in in Spain" and she said "Yes" and then she explained all about it.

to be continued...

PUNK
1976.

Punk started as a revolutionary thing, but as you know it exploded in 1977 with the Sex Pistols with Anarchy in the U.K. and God save the Queen, which got banned by the B.B.C. but got to No 2 in the charts. Other punk bands like the Clash, the Damned, XTC, the Jam, Penetration and Sham 69 to name a few are still around today. Punk is still there no matter what any one says.

Mods are also back, and there are a few good Mod bands like Purple Hearts and the Fixations.

People say that punk has been really big, but it has only been big in England. It has never been big in a big country like America and Germany, where singers make millions in a year. Mods really hit those two countries. Also the film Quadrophenia has been a smash hit in America, and The great Rock and Roll Swindle, the Sex Pistols film has not yet been released.

I will be telling you about reggae in the next issue.

PRODUCED BY

The people who did this edition of the Hackney Kids paper are: Lee James, Nick Crowe, Paul Bellenie,

Chris Bryant, Delroy Smith, Lisa Bellenie, Dean Smith, Lloyd Brown, Steve King and Jimmy Jackson.

ITN



THIS IS
NOT THE 9 O'CLOCK
NEWS BUT THE
H.P.P. XMAS EDITION
THANK YOU

information

All listings on this page are inserted absolutely FREE.

The information on this page has been revised and updated, but we would welcome any further corrections or additions. For the January issue please send them to us by FRIDAY 21 DECEMBER. Our address is HPP, c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8.

Community, Tenants and Pensioners Groups

HACKNEY PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION
34 Dalston Lane, E8
Advice service on Tuesday and Thursdays from 10.30 to 4pm. Tea Bar Monday to Friday 10.30 to 4pm.

TASK FORCE
34 Dalston Lane, E8. Tel. 254 1620
Free advice for pensioners in Hackney. Odd jobs and visits in N16 and N4 only. Pensioners' activities and neighbourhood care in N5.

HACKNEY ASSOCIATION FOR WELFARE OF OLD PEOPLE
22 Dalston Lane, E8. Tel. 254 0715

HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT
74 Downham Road N1.
Social and advice centre, aimed particularly at black people.
Tuesday 10am-10pm
Thursday 10am-4.30pm
Friday 10am-10pm

OFF CENTRE
25 Hackney Grove, E8. Tel. 985 8566
Advice for young people between 13 and 25 with any problems.
Monday-Friday 10am-6pm (open until 8.30pm on Wednesdays).

FRIENDS ANONYMOUS SERVICE
Friendship House, 27 Hackney Grove, E8.
24 hour telephone service with people always willing to listen and act.
986 2233 (24 hours)
985 0973 (office hours)
986 9146 (office hours)

FEDERATION OF HACKNEY TENANTS ASSOCIATIONS
Represents borough, GLC and private tenants throughout Hackney. Contact

Steve Jacobs, c/o ALHE,
17 Victoria Park Square, E2 (981 1221).

HACKNEY GINGERBREAD
Group for one parent families. Meets every Monday at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N16. Creche available. Contact Teresa Blackhall, 729 1647 for details.

HOMERTON GINGERBREAD
Group for one parent families. Meets every other Friday at the Wally Foster Centre. Contact 985 3872 for details.

Ecology

HACKNEY FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
Active group, campaigning on safe energy, bikes, wildlife, recycling etc. Contact Jim Lead, 67 Fairholt Road, N16. 802 0122.

HACKNEY ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP
Open to all those wishing to combat nuclear power. Meets every other Thursday in Centerprise. Contact 226 1799

SUN POWER ECOLOGY CENTRE
83, Blackstock Road, N.4.
Bookshop specialises in the environment, cooking, health, education, childrens' books; also crafts and some wholefoods. 01 226 1799

HACKNEY SOCIETY

An amenity group, affiliated to the Civic Trust, concerned with Hackney's environment and architecture. Meets on the third Monday of each month. Details from Chairman, David Batchelor, Tel. 985 7937 or Secretary, Robert Hill, 75 Glyn Road E5 Tel. 986 8761.

Women

HACKNEY SOCIALIST FEMINIST GROUP
Meet alternate Mondays at the Factory, Matthias Road, N 16, at 7.30pm. Contact Pat 254 5821 or Harriet 254 6208.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE
Tel. 340 6145. 24 hour information and advice.

HACKNEY ABORTION CAMPAIGN
Meetings fortnightly at 20 Parkholme Road, E8. Contact 249 3768 for details.

HACKNEY COMMUNIST PARTY WOMEN'S GROUP

Meets monthly - talks, films, activities. For information phone Nathalie 254 9508.

YFC CENTRE

Drop-in centre for Young Unemployed.

Free snacks, use of telephones and newspapers. A meeting place for the young unemployed.

Off Centre Basement.
25 Hackney Grove, E8.
986 4016.

Community Centres

CENTERPRISE
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9632.
Bookshop and office hours:
Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6.30pm.
Coffee bar and meeting room hours:
Tuesday-Friday 10am-9.30pm.
Saturday 10am-5.30pm.

FACILITIES:
Coffee bar; bookshop; advice, information and contacts for individuals and groups. Typewriters can be used free, duplicating at cost price. Ask in General Office.
ADVICE CENTRE:
Legal and welfare advice session on Thursdays 8.30-7.30pm.

READING CENTRE:
For adults who find it hard to read or write. Contact Sue Shrapnel or ring 254 9635.
PUBLISHING PROJECT:
Publishing books by people who live in Hackney.

WALLY FOSTER CENTRE
Homerton Road, E9. Tel. 985 3972.
Community Centre with many activities:
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVICE CENTRE: every weekday 9am-5pm.
ADULT LITERACY CLASSES:
Every Monday at 7pm.

Also playgroup, mothers and toddlers group, pensioners lunch club, school welfare advice, youth club for 5-8 year olds, Kung Fu and juvenile dance classes.
See also **ADVICE** and **NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGLISH** CLASSES listings.

THE FACTORY
107 Matthias Road, N16 (next to Newington Green School). Tel. 249 3066.
Runs mothers and toddlers clubs, sewing classes, English classes, youth club, childminders drop-in group (creche provided), after school club, arts and crafts club, pensioners lunch club, food co-op and an Indian dance class.
Contact them for further details.

THE FAMILY CENTRE
50 Rectory Road, N16. Tel. 249 8334.
Information and help for all community problems. Cooking, washing, creche facilities. Mothers and toddlers group on Thursdays. 1.30-3.30pm (homeworkers especially welcome). "Encourage your child to read" class on Mondays. 5.30-7.30pm. Supplementary school now operating. Classes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Contact them for further information. Also see **ADVICE** and **Neighbourhood English** Classes and **Gingerbread** under **COMMUNITY GROUPS** listings on this page.

HOXTON HALL
128a Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 5431.
Runs playgroup, pensioners lunch club, legal advice centre, after-school junior club and writers' workshop as well as evening classes in shoe repairing, dressmaking, pottery, crafts, old-time dancing and singing. Also Women's Discussion Group and the Hoxton Drama Group.
Many events take place in the theatre each month—see the **EVENTS** and **MEETINGS** section. Also see **ADVICE** listing.

CHATS PALACE
42-44 Brooksby's Walk, E9.
986 6714. Meeting space, bar for club members, duplicating, workshop, clubs, classes, jazz, music hall, supplementary school, youth activities, hall for hire.

Education

ADULT LITERACY SCHEMES
For details of adult literacy courses in your area contact:

Carol Morris, **BETHNAL GREEN AEI**, 229 Bethnal Green Road, E2. 739 7790.

Donald Kenrick, **CLAPTON AEI**, Brooke House, Kenninghall Road, E5. 985 9646.

Graham Morris, **HACKNEY COLLEGE**, 249 7221.

June Hewes, **HACKNEY LIBRARIES**, Shoreditch Library, Pittfield Street, N1. 739 5153.

Sue Shrapnel, **HACKNEY READING CENTRE**, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8. 254 9635.

Cal Weatherall, **HIGHBURY MANOR AEI**, Jack Ashley School, Blackstock Road, N4 226 9190.

John Rake, **HOXTON HALL**, 128a Hoxton Street, N1. 739 5431.

HACKNEY LANGUAGE SCHEME
Teach the kind of English needed in day-to-day life. Classes operate throughout Hackney. For further information contact Annette Giles, 249 1496, or call at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N.16 on Thursday mornings.

Meditation

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION Partnership for Progress in Hackney: regular introductory talks. Ring 254 6280 for details.

ANANDA MARGA
1 Cazenove Road, N.16.

For spiritual progress and social change. Meditation classes for men Wednesday 8.00pm
Meditation classes for women Tuesday 8.00pm and Wednesday 2.00pm.
Sewing class Tuesday 7.00pm.

Advice

Free legal advice on housing, landlord and tenant, employment, social security, welfare, matrimonial, immigration and discrimination problems can be obtained from the following centres:

CENTERPRISE
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9632.
THURSDAYS 6.30-7.30pm.

HOXTON HALL
128a Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 5431.
WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

KINGSMEAD
Wally Foster Centre, Homerton High Street, E9. Tel. 985 3804.
TUESDAYS 7-8pm.
STOKE NEWINGTON ADVICE GROUP SERVICE.
102 Manor Road, N16. Tel. 800 3710.
MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

ALLEN ROAD
12 Allen Road, N16.
THURSDAYS 7-8pm.

Advice can also be obtained from:

HACKNEY ADVICE BUREAU & LAW CENTRE
236-8 Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 8446.
Open Monday-Friday 10am-5pm (7.30 on Thursdays).
Legal aid and advice on housing, rents, repairs and employment problems.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX
1-11 Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 4654.
106 Old Street, EC1. Tel. 253 2155.
HACKNEY COUNCIL FOR RACIAL EQUALITY. 245 Mare St, E8.
TUESDAYS 7-8.30pm.
Immigration, discrimination, housing law and other problems. 986 4121.

THE FAMILY CENTRE
50 Rectory Road, N16. Tel. 249 8334.
Information and help in all community problems. Cooking, washing, creche facilities. Open all day.

HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE
302-4 Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 8123.
Helps with all housing problems. Repairs, rebates, landlord/tenant, council/tenant.

HACKNEY CENTRAL INFORMATION BUREAU
Town Hall, Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 3123.

HACKNEY NORTH LABOUR PARTY ADVICE CENTRE
5 Stamford Hill, N16.
Advice and information on legal, financial, welfare, housing, social security and personal problems. FRIDAYS 7-8pm.

RECTORY HOUSING AND WELFARE ADVICE CENTRE
Family Centre, 50 Rectory Road, N16.
Help with housing, employment, health and social security and community and race relations problems.
SUNDAYS 10.30am-12.00 noon.

Advice can also be obtained from **HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT**, **OFF CENTRE** and **FRIENDS ANONYMOUS**. See Community Groups listing on this page.

For MPs and councillors Advice surgeries see **LABOUR PARTY** under **POLITICAL GROUPS** listing on this page.

Arrested? Helping enquiries? Evicted?
EMERGENCY LEGAL SERVICE
Ring 986 9891. 24 hour free legal service from 6pm Friday over whole weekend.

Workshops

THE WORKSHOP
81 Lenthall Road, E8. Tel. 254 3082.
Print your own posters and T-shirts. Cost of materials only. Open by arrangement.

COMET WORKSHOP
Halcomb Street, N1. Tel. 729 0936.
Learn sewing, macrame, toymaking, woodwork. Creche available, toy library. Tea and coffee. Open every weekday.

WORKSHOP
77a, Lauriston Road, E.9.
01 986 9585 Open 10.00 - 6.00 Mon. - Sat.

Pottery workshop and shop selling ceramics and pottery handmade in the workshop. Also Macrame plant hangers, jewelry, cards and other crafts.

Gays

GAY SWITCHBOARD
Tel. 837 7324. 24 hour information and advice.

EAST LONDON CHE (Campaign for Homosexual Equality)
East London CHE welcomes gay women and men. For details phone John, 504 1110 or Kate, 539 2331.

GEMMA
Gemma Group for Disabled Lesbians, including older women. Contact BM Box 5700, London WC1V 6XX.

Transport

HACKNEY PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACTION COMMITTEE
Meets regularly to discuss how to improve public transport in Hackney. Contact Tony Jacobs, 3 Hockley House, Morning Lane, E9. Tel. 986 2303.

HACKNEY CYCLISTS ACTION GROUP
Contact Tessa Bain, 10 Kynaston Road, N.16. 254 4559



Health

CITY AND HACKNEY COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL
Shoreditch Health Centre, 210 Kingsland Road, E2. Tel. 739 6308/8351.
The public's voice in the NHS—provides advice, takes up your complaints and criticisms. Open meeting on 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm. Publishes **HEALTH IN HACKNEY**: a comprehensive FREE guide to health facilities and services in the area.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN HACKNEY
Advice, ideas, information. Trying to contact all families in district with a handicapped child. Contact Ann Pardon, 48 Mount Pleasant Lane, E5. Tel. 808 8436.

Volunteers needed at: Huddleston Centre, St James the Great Church, Lower Clapton Rd. E.5. 01 985 8869.

THE BIRTH CENTRE
188 Old Street, EC1. Tel. 251 4076.
Information, advice, lectures and seminars on birth at home and in hospital. Open evening every Wednesday 8pm. 25p.

EAST LONDON WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP
c/o 116 Albion Drive, E8.

STOKE NEWINGTON HEALTH GROUP
Local people interested in all matters concerned with health. Contact Alan Clarke, 21 Kynaston Road, N.16. 254 3277.

COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION
188 Old Street, EC1. 251 4076.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL CANCER CONTROL CAMPAIGN

Hackney & District branch. Meets at John Scott Health Centre, Green Lanes, N4. Contact Rose McNulty 800 3108 (evenings) or Hilda Burd 800 2124 (anytime).

Children

HACKNEY UNDER FIVES
136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

Information and support for parents with children under school age. Stores open on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Open monthly meetings on 3rd Tuesday of each month. Tel 254 9145.

HACKNEY PLAY ASSOCIATION
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9145.
Information, advice and help to people organising play facilities for children. Contact Lilian McPetridge

CHILD-CARE BULLETIN COLLECTIVE
112b Forest Road E8.
Publishes bulletins and pamphlets about child care and related topics. Collective is open to anyone interested. Contact 226 0817 or 254 2227 for details of next meeting—with creche.

Food

TOWARDS JUPITER
191 Mare Street E8. 985 5394
Wholefood shop also selling books and crafts.
FOOD FOR ALL
3 Cazenove Road, N16. Tel. 806 4138.
Wholefood shop, also selling books and crafts.

SHANTI VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT
1 Cazenove Road, N.16

Vegetarian meals.
Wed, Thurs and Fri 7.00-9.00pm.
Sat 12.00-2.00pm.
Full vegetarian meal 65p.

Vegetarian cooking classes:
Wed 5.30pm and Sat 10.30am.

Music

POETRY AND MUSIC CLUB
The Chatterbox, 1a, Chatterton Rd, (off Blackstock Rd.) Finsbury Park, N.4.
Weds. 8.00 - 11.00 p.m.
All welcome. 20p admission. Performers free.

ISLINGTON & HACKNEY MUSIC WORKSHOP
Sing-song third Thursday every month. 8pm. Free.
Ring Dave 249 0025.

HOME GROWN MUSIC
Chats Palace every Thursday at 8.00pm. 50p admission. Floor singers should contact John Lockhart on 986 6714.

HACKNEY CHESS CLUB
Weds. 7.30pm - 10.30pm
Fri. 7.30pm - 10.00pm
Centerprise Daily
Tues. - Sat.
For any information contact T. Wilson, 135, Manor Road, N.16 5PB.

GOODBYE TO THE 70s

In the first half of a special article reviewing the last decade KEN WORPOLE looks at Hackney in the 1970s as it was reported in the pages of HPP and its predecessors amongst the alternative press in Hackney.

The first alternative or "community" paper to set up shop in Hackney was the "Stoke Newington People's Paper". The first edition came out in August 1970 running the headline story: "In Hackney 22,000 families are waiting for a house, but the Tory council have cut building from 2,000 to 400 a year". Tory council? Yes, Hackney's Tory council. If 1968 meant revolutionary optimism in an international context, in Hackney it produced the first Conservative council in Hackney since the mid-thirties, and no likelihood since of a return. The other main article, apart from the lead story on the terrible housing situation, was a guide to people's rights with regard to the police. For a big issue then was the number of young people, particularly young black people, who were being given a hard time by the local police.

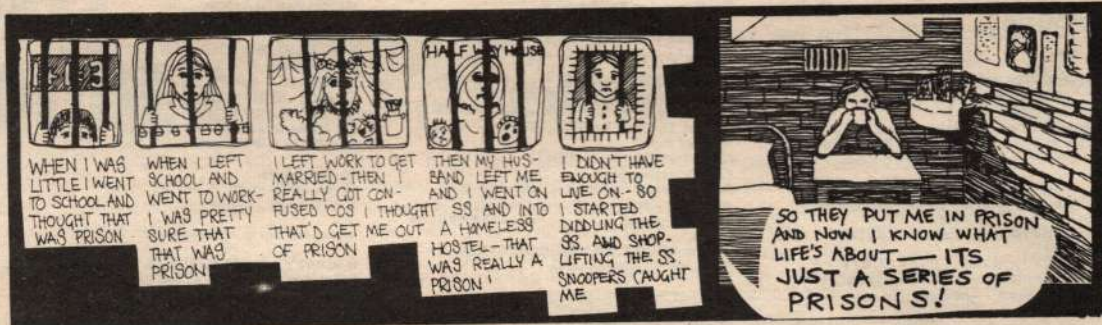
By the time the second edition of the SNPP was out, another, more scurrilous, broadsheet was on the street, "Hackney's Pros and Cons". This was produced by a small group of entrists into the Labour party who had managed to find their way out. When they had left the Labour party, they had managed to smuggle out some particularly ripe gossip about certain Labour councillors, and in the second edition of the paper, by describing one of the councillors as "the best money can buy", secured for themselves the first libel action of the decade. The case against them was handled by Mr Stanley Clinton-Davis MP. The other main story in



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that edition named two local police officers with a nasty habit of "fitting up" certain young people on "Sus" charges. "Hackney Pros and Cons" never appeared again.

In the spring 1971 edition of the SNPP the main article concerned the death of Stephen McCarthy, a young Islington teenager who died as a result of head injuries received whilst being arrested by the police; his head had been banged against a bus shelter. No prosecutions ever resulted from that case. The paper warned its readers of



One Prisoner Less - HPP April 1974.

difficult times ahead with the Tories back in power with a vicious Industrial Relations Act on the books as well as a new Immigration Bill, the one which brought back into our vocabulary "patrials" and "non-patrials", or "When did you last see your grandfather?"

In the same edition the SNPP reported that Jeff Crawford, a well-known black activist, had been shot at as he was leaving a meeting in Stamford Hill. Bernadette Devlin spoke to a large audience at the King's Hall Baths, organised by the Hackney Federation of Tenants. It was announced that the Chest Clinics at the Metropolitan and St Leonard's Hospitals were to close.

DO-GOODERY

In June 1971, the SNPP barely noticed the opening the month previous of the Centerprise bookshop at 34 Dalston Lane. Another example of petit bourgeois de-goodery. More interesting was the publication of "Stepney Words" and the sacking of teacher Chris Searle, which received more attention as did the appearance of "Hackney Miscarriage", a tasteless magazine produced for local school students, elated by a wave of school strikes in the borough.

The September issue of SNPP ran a large feature on the poor conditions at the Mothers' Hospital in Clapton which started a long campaign for improvements, still going on today. It also ran a story about a man who had hanged himself in Stoke Newington police station and felt that at least a case of negligence ought to be examined.

In June 1972, some time after the disappearance of the SNPP, a new paper announced itself: "Hackney Action". The relatively new Hackney branch of the Workers' Educational Association announced a course on "The Housing Finance Act" as part of a partisan programme of local adult education. There was a long article on the Kwame Nkrumah Supplementary School which was a black consciousness school for local schoolchildren run on Saturdays. Local black militant, Tony Soares, wrote from prison thanking people associat-

ed with "Hackney Action" for their support in his case. He had been imprisoned for inciting readers of "Grass Roots" to contravene the Firearms Act and the Explosive Substances Act of 1883. What had happened was that "Grass Roots" had simply reproduced a political document of the American Black Panthers. It later transpired that the person who lodged the complaint against Tony Soares which resulted in the court charges was none other than the Community Relations Officer of Hackney, using the legal services of Mr Stanley Clinton-Davis MP.

The July edition of "Hackney Action" ran a story on the "Beeches Home" scandal which had received national press coverage. "Beeches" was a children's home in Suffolk where more than one child had died through lack of care and it was the death of a Hackney child which had precipitated the national demand for an investigation.

In October 1972, "Hackney Action" reported the publication of a small book of poems by a young West Indian, Vivian Usherwood. The collection had been published by Centerprise and in the next few years it was to make Vivian one of the bestselling poets of the decade. The same issue described the activities of the Hackney Trades Council Action Committee, whose members were organising an all-out campaign against the Industrial Relations Act, and who had already been active on the picket lines at Midland Cold Storage, where five dockers had been arrested and imprisoned at Pentonville.

In January 1973, the now solid Labour council faced a major test of principle: to agree or not to agree to implement the Tory Housing Finance Act. They agreed. In March 1973, the Hackney WEA announced a course on "Popular Music". George Melly was the guest speaker at the first meeting on March 20 and spoke to an absolutely packed audience at "The Swan" in Kingsland Road on the music of Bessie Smith. The March edition of "Hackney Action" noted the formation of a new pressure group of facilities for preschool age children, the Hackney Under Fives Committee.

Between March and May in 1973, "Hackney Action", together with the "Hackney Gutter Press", copies of which seem unavailable, merged to form the more durable "Hackney People's Press". One of the stories in the first edition of HPP took to pieces an incident in Hackney which the "Evening Standard" headlined: "Mob Storms Police Station". The "Standard" and also the "Hackney Gazette" (which really ought to be given the credit for stimulating all alternative papers in Hackney) had painted a picture of a "mob of screaming teenagers, girls amongst them, stormed an East London police station trying to free a man police were questioning". What had happened was that eight friends of a young man arrested by the police followed him to the police station and waited outside. The police had been argumentative and a small fracas had broken out. Not the Bastille, not the Winter Palace, but simply Dalston Police Station on a quiet summer evening.

CELEBRITY

In July 1973, "Hackney People's Press" contained a long interview with May Hobbs, who had recently won a successful struggle to organise women office cleaners into the TGWU. May Hobbs had become a national celebrity in many ways as an example of the effects of the spread of

women's liberation ideas. Later on in the year she wrote her autobiography, "Born To Struggle!", the story of her life mainly based in Hoxton. The Hackney WEA announced a new project, a "Music Workshop", which eventually became the now well-known "Hackney and Islington Music Workshop".

For some time in the early 1970s a housing struggle had been going on in the area to the east of Queensbridge Road, the Mapledene Estate. Local residents, having seen the disaster of the Holly Street development stuck their heels in and opposed Hackney Council redevelopment plans. In August 1973, the HPP announced a victory for the Mapledene Residents Association and the area stayed as terraced housing.

In February 1974, HPP ran a story about a group of women who were planning to set up in Hackney a Women's Aid centre, for battered wives. This was the time of a power workers' strike and Christopher Murphy, the Tory Parliamentary candidate for Bethnal Green and Bow, wrote to the Hackney Gazette about the exemplary behaviour of one of his prospective constituents: "As there is a certain reluctance on the behalf of many to comprehend the phrase 'in the national interest', I would like to mention the actions of one senior citizen. When the Government asked everyone to be economical in their use of electricity, she cut her heating and lighting by half. Sitting wrapped in a blanket became the order of the day and light bulbs were removed to avoid temptation. Perhaps her action might be an object lesson for more selfish attitudes which are currently in vogue". Presumably, Mr Murphy followed her example, and with the national interest still at issue, he may well still be sitting there, light bulbs removed to avoid temptation.

to be continued next month

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish the paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor and no shareholders and no one is paid by the paper.

HPP is your newspaper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to come and help us. All decisions are made collectively.

We hold meetings every Monday (except the last one in each month) at 8pm in Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8. You can come along to one of these meetings and volunteer to help us write, produce or sell the next issue - or simply tell us what you think of the paper.

If you can't come one Monday then write to us c/o Centerprise or ring 249 0311 any evening or weekend.

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